



# GRAVENHURST

## Parish Council

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Gravenhurst  
Parish Council held in the Village Hall, Gravenhurst  
on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Present: Councillors: Lockey (Chair), Cooper, Robertson, Sibley, Simkins and Thaneja  
Clerk: A Marabese  
Public: 0 members of the public

Meeting started at 7:45pm.

8140. Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Ward Councillor Stephenson.

8141. Chair's announcements:

- a. A notice on openness and transparency of the meeting was read out.
- b. To resolve to extend the meeting finish time beyond 2 hours.  
Councillors agreed that this was not required this evening.
- c. Other information.  
None.

8142. Members interests

- a. To receive declarations of interest from councillors on agenda items, requests for dispensations and grant any requests for dispensations.  
None.

### PUBLIC SESSION

8143. The Chair suspended Standing Orders at 7:50pm to receive a report from the Ward Councillor and to allow members of the public to address the Council in relation to items on the agenda or request matters to be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

a. Ward Councillor Report (read by Clerk)

- Ward Councillor Grant Scheme: Reminder that money is still available (very few grant applications received this year), so I would encourage groups (including the Parish Council itself) to apply for a grant if needed for any equipment needs before year-end. It looks highly likely that this grant scheme will come to an end after this financial year due to budgetary constraints.
- 200 Bus Service: After some digging I have found out that the 200 bus service no longer travels through Gravenhurst from 16th February because, I am told by Grant Palmer and CBC that; a) there is regularly only one customer, b) the junction between Clophill Road and the A507 is considered - by Grant Palmer - to be dangerous to navigate, c) Wanderbus remains an option.
- Central Bedfordshire Budget: This will be debated by Full Council on 27th February. Central Beds budget is in a poor shape with out of control spending and depletion of reserves. Let's see how the budget will be balanced later this month.
- Local Plan: The call for sites ran until 20th January. The plan is still in development and we're awaiting further updates. A consultation should be expected in Spring 2026.

b. Village organisations

- None present.

c. Questions and issues raised by the public with council members:

- i. What can be done about the destruction of the hedge on Barton Road near Fairbourne?



The Clerk advised that CBC Planning Enforcement have advised that the trees can be removed in terms of planning but that they have forwarded the issue to Highways to investigate. *The Clerk was asked to contact the owner and ask for a meeting / discussion on plans to reinstate the hedging.*

- ii. What can be done about the muddy entrance to the Recreation Ground. The Clerk confirmed that the wet conditions over the winter months and the requirement for contractor access had made this already wet area muddier. *The Clerk was asked to include the entrance area in plans for the new footpath.*

Standing orders were re-instated at 8:05pm

#### **MINUTES**

8144. Adoption of minutes of the Meeting of Gravenhurst Parish Council held on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

*Proposed Councillor Robertson/Seconded Councillor Simkins. Resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record by the Chair. Carried.*

#### **PROCEDURES, CONSULTATIONS AND LEGAL**

8145. To re-approve:

- a. GPC Investment Policy v1.0 (no changes).
- b. GPC Reserves Policy v1.0 (no changes).
- c. GPC Dignity at Work v1.0 (no changes).

*Proposed Councillor Thaneja/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to re-approve GPC Investment Policy v1.0, GPC Reserves Policy v1.0 and GPC Dignity at Work v1.0. Carried.*

#### **PLANNING AND HOUSING**

8146. Planning applications to consider.

- a. CB/25/00169/FULL - 42 High Street, MK45 4HZ - Erection of a single storey rear infill extension.

*Proposed Councillor Thaneja/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved that the Council has no objection to planning application 25/00169. Carried.*

#### **ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE**

8147. Recreation Ground - To receive update on all matters concerning the Recreation Ground and consider any actions.

- a. Update on Recreation Ground Improvement project and any actions required to include:

- i. Signage.  
This is in progress.

- ii. Other

The Clerk has been given keys for vehicular access to the toddler play area and has asked the installation team to fill gaps that may have formed under rubber matting in the play area. Installation team still to level off old play equipment areas when weather permits.

- b. To review Recreation Ground Inspection Reports and schedule for those inspecting.

Councillor Cooper has advised the Clerk that he has conducted regular inspections and will complete inspections until the next GPC meeting. It was



noted that the Clerk needs to update the weekly inspection checklist so that it reflects the new play equipment.

c. Coppicing update.

Works completed on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Logs left in piles and wood chippings also left in piles (to be used on site).

d. Working party tasks and dates.

The Clerk suggested that after completion of the coppicing and hedging works in the Recreation Ground there are several jobs that require completion e.g.: removal of ivy from oaks and other trees, spreading wood chippings around newly planted hedging, litter picking etc. It is suggested that we request help from residents via a volunteer working party at a weekend. Councillors agreed that this would be a great idea and asked that the Clerk arrange a working party for 26<sup>th</sup> April from 10am to 12:30 with refreshments provided in the Village Hall after the event.

e. Request to run fitness class.

The Clerk has received a request to run a fitness class on the Recreation Ground. The requestor has submitted all the relevant documentation, and this has been approved by the Clerk via delegated powers.

f. All other items.

The Clerk reported that the outer hedges of the Recreation Ground have been cut back and that the goal posts need to be re-positioned when manpower is available to do so.

8148. Allotments – To receive update on allotments and consider any actions:

a. Update on allotment orchard and grant application.

The grant application was approved by CBC and therefore an order was placed with a tree and accessories supplier. The trees have been delivered, and Mr Beer is planting them. He will need help to install the fencing around them.

b. Other updates.

Site clearance works started were started in January and agreement made between Mr Beer and the contractor about return visits. We have two new plot holders pending clearance works and the tenant issued with a notice to quit has relinquished his plot.

8149. To consider how to deal with issue of dog fouling in village.

The Clerk reported that she had received a complaint from a resident saying that unfortunately, since the opening of Orchard Close the new housing development in Gravenhurst, there has been a notable issue of dog fouling on the pavements and footpaths in Upper Gravenhurst. It is requested that GPC take some action / or offer education to tackle the problem. Councillors agreed that the issue of dog fouling was increasing in the village and requested that the Clerk put together an article for the Grapevine and also put together a social media campaign.

**HIGHWAYS AND LIGHTING**

8150. To receive update on any Highways matters and consider any actions.

a. Fix My Street reports.

The Clerk advised that after discussing with Settle the damage to the orchard Close kerbs made by heavy vehicles as part of their development that both of their contractors agreed to make repairs to, Settle have now advised that:



*"Because this area is outside of the Settle owned site, we don't have permission to work beyond the area identified in the approved s.278 highway agreement plan. The s.278 highway agreement work is currently in the process of being signed off and the contractor is awaiting a final inspection. The identified paving damage is in a high traffic area and will need to be reported to the Central Bedfordshire Highways team through the online portal."*

The Clerk has now contacted CBC and requested confirmation on what the s278 works to be signed off include.

#### **CEMETERY**

8151. Update on Cemetery inspection actions and St Marys Churchyard mapping. Gap in Cemetery hedge to be re-planted in autumn / spring with established blackthorn, boxwood etc. The Clerk was asked to contact local nurseries for plants nearer the time
8152. Update on pest control at St Mary's Cemetery and actions required.  
An update is required from the contractor who may be asked to visit site again.

#### **FINANCE MATTERS**

8153. To approve purchase orders.
- a. CPR / defib training.  
The Clerk and Councillor Lockey reported that they had requested, via social media, if residents would like to attend a defib / CPR training session. The request was met with positive approval from more than 20 people saying they would like to attend. The Clerk has spoken to Community Heartbeat Trust who offer the training at £175 and is waiting to hear back from the East Anglian Air Ambulance about their training.  
*Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved that the Clerk arrange for CPR / defibrillator training on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May from 7pm to 9pm in the Village Hall and arrange for refreshments as required. (Local Government Act 1972, s.137). Carried.*
  - b. Replacement of electricity box on Recreation Ground at cost of £1,285.70.  
The Clerk advised that council had previously allowed for a budget £600 to replace the electricity box on the Recreation Ground but that a quotation received is for £1285.70. The Clerk has requested quotations from other electricians.
  - c. Tree coppicing adjacent to 55 Clophill Road.  
The Clerk and Councillor Cooper met with the homeowners of 55 Clophill Road and agreed that trees from the Recreation Ground are overhanging a great deal. If GPC do not carry out coppicing works, then risk works to the trees that are harmful.  
*Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved to issue purchase order to Scott's Grounds Maintenance for £230+VAT (Open Spaces Act 1906, s.10). Carried.*
  - d. Other purchase orders.  
None.
8154. Grant applications to consider:
- a. CPRE request for £400 in the 2025/2026 financial year.  
*Proposed Councillor Robertson/Seconded Councillor Simkins. Resolved to approve grant request of £400 to CPRE and that payment be added to the May meeting list. Carried.*



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8155. To approve bank reconciliations to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025.

*Proposed Councillor Sibley/Seconded Councillor Thaneja. Resolved to approve bank statements and bank reconciliations to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025, and that they be signed by councillors at the meeting. Carried.*

8156. To approve payments to be made.

*Proposed Councillor Lockey/Seconded Councillor Robertson. Resolved that payments, as presented to Council, be approved for payment. Carried.*

| Payment No:                                          | Payee                                 | Purpose                                               | Amount    |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Direct Debits and payments made before agenda issued |                                       |                                                       |           |
| DD76A                                                | SSE                                   | Street Lighting 01/10/24 to 31/12/24 (taken 05/02/25) | £180.80   |
| DD76B                                                | SSE                                   | Street Lighting 01/10/24 to 31/12/24 (taken 05/02/25) | £41.86    |
| Payments requested with distribution of agenda       |                                       |                                                       |           |
| BACS758                                              | Anglian Water Business (National) Ltd | Cemetery Water                                        | £20.45    |
| BACS759                                              | Gravenhurst Village Hall              | Room Hire 16/01/25                                    | £24.00    |
| BACS760                                              | C Carpenter Horticultural Services    | Allotment Orchard trees and accessories               | £1,010.00 |
| BACS761                                              | Unity Trust Bank                      | Bank charges January 2025                             | £6.00     |
| BACS762                                              | A Marabese                            | Feb Salary                                            |           |
| BACS763                                              | Branching Out                         | Coronation copse works                                | £1,320.00 |
| BACS764                                              | NTT Engineering                       | Tracotr repairs                                       | £1,875.44 |

### MEETING CLOSE

8157. Close of meeting

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 8:45pm

Certified a true copy of the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup>  
February 2025.

Signed .....  
(Chairperson)

Date .....